

Putting Research to Work for Military Families



Focus:
Multiple
Branches

Fostering Resilience in National Guard and Reserve Families: A Contextual Adaptation of an Evidence-Based Parenting Program

Pinna, K. L., Hanson, S., Zhang, N., & Gewirtz, A. H. (2017). Fostering resilience in National Guard and Reserve families: A contextual adaptation of an evidence-based parenting program *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry*, 87(2), 185-193. doi:10.1037/ort000221

SUMMARY: Cultural adaptations to existing interventions have been found to increase participant engagement and satisfaction. The After Deployment, Adaptive Parenting Tools (ADAPT) intervention is a military adaptation of an existing parenting program that seeks to address deployment-related stressors in National Guard and Reserve (NG/R) soldiers and their families in an effort to maximize both participant engagement and satisfaction. Findings indicate a high level of engagement in and satisfaction with the intervention.

KEY FINDINGS:

- Three-quarters (75.36%, 156 families) of the 207 families who were randomly assigned to participate in the ADAPT intervention attended at least one in-person session.
- Group attendance did not differ significantly between mothers and fathers.
- Family engagement in the intervention was significantly higher for groups that had at least one military-connected facilitator leading the group.
- Families reported high satisfaction, giving individual sessions an average score ranging from 3.37-3.59 (M = 3.44, SD = .48) out of 4.00.

IMPLICATIONS FOR PROGRAMS:

Programs could:

- Offer programming that is delivered by at least one military-connected facilitator (who either belongs to a military family or who works within a military system) in order to increase military family engagement
- Engage Service members and their partners in programming that addresses the challenges of reintegration
- Enhance education, activities, and curriculum related to deployment and family reintegration

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICIES:

Policies could:

- Continue to support programs that address the unique challenges faced by military families who have experienced a deployment
- Collaborate with community organizations that offer interventions that have been adapted specifically for military families
- Recommend education for service providers around the importance of providing programming that has been developed specifically for military culture

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METHODS

- Participants were recruited through various outreach efforts, including during reintegration events, as well as through mailings, flyers, and social media.
- To be eligible, families needed to have at least one child between the ages of four and 12 years living with them and to have at least one parent who deployed to OEF/OIF/OND.
- Engagement, determined by the number of sessions attended and the completion of home practice assignments, participant satisfaction, positive group experiences, and home practice satisfaction were assessed for differences between demographics (e.g., men and women, military-connected facilitators and non-military-connected facilitators).

PARTICIPANTS

- Participants included the 156 NG/R families who attended at least one in-person session of the ADAPT intervention.
- Average parent age was 35.97 years (SD = 6.11), and most of the participants were White (92.6%)
- Most parents were married (88.7%) for an average of 9.7 years (SD = 5.10), and average annual household income was between \$60,000 and \$69,000.

LIMITATIONS

- The sample was predominantly White and middle class, so the results may not generalize to a more diverse and less economically stable group of NG/R.
- The sample was limited to NG/R families in one state (Minnesota), so the results may not generalize to the entire military population.
- The incorporation of military-connected facilitators was not part of the original randomized design, which means other untested variables could have influenced the results.

AVENUES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research could:

- Expand the study to include a more economically and racially diverse population
- Broaden the study's scope to include NG/R soldiers from other states
- Include military-connected facilitators in the randomization process in order to ensure that other untested variables are not accounting for the differences found

ASSESSING RESEARCH THAT WORKS



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